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Rep. Michael Day leads access to counsel legislative briefing

May 20, 2025 . 5:26 PM — 2 min read

State Rep. Michael S. Day leads a legislative briefing on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's Access to Counsel Program. COURTESY PHOTO

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael Day:

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State Rep. Michael S. Day and Rep. David Rogers led a legislative briefing on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts's Access to Counsel Program.

The briefing focused on the establishment and operation of the Access to Counsel pilot program, which helps prevent evictions, reduces shelter and healthcare costs for the Commonwealth and keeps families housed, by providing indigent tenants and landlords with legal representation during eviction processes in the courts.

Launched in the fiscal year 2025 budget and administered through the state-funded Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, the Access to Counsel Pilot Program initially included $2.5 million in funding.

Day and Rogers worked with their colleagues in the House and Senate to launch the pilot program last year to provide more equitable representation to individuals facing eviction from their homes. In Massachusetts, roughly 2.5% of tenants facing eviction were represented by legal counsel, while more than 90% of landlords had legal counsel in the same proceedings.

"Providing access to counsel to tenants facing eviction helps provide access to justice in our courts and levels the playing field in the legal process," said Day. "This program provides both low-income tenants and landlords with legal counsel, who can help ensure the protection of valid legal rights and allow the parties to reach equitable resolutions of these disputes. This has already proven to be successful in providing relief to our courts, fairness to the parties and solutions that avoid furthering the problems that come with homelessness."

Annette Duke, senior housing staff attorney at Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, and Lynne Parker, Eeecutive director of Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, spoke at the briefing about the program over the past year.

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During the initial reporting period from Jan. 1, 2025 – Feb. 28, 2025, the program reached 227 parties. Of the households served, 41% included children, 76% were women, 58% reported having a disability, 44% identified as White and 56% identified as People of Color.

"As we in the Commonwealth continue to face housing shortages, the Access to Counsel program has proven to be a fiscally responsible and effective tool in preventing evictions and promoting housing stability," continued Day. "I greatly appreciate partnering with Representative Rogers and the coalition of attorneys supporting this program from across Massachusetts and I am hopeful that my colleagues will continue to fund it."

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'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. Set in the 1920s, this iconic production is sure to leave the audience wanting more. Performances will

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his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

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